

Royal Botanic Gardens  
**Kew**

Inspiring futures

**Orla Elliston**



**Tell us about your job**

Botanical Horticulturist.

**Why is science important in your career?**

We need to know the science between how plants grow and the other living organisms that help or hurt our plants. This helps us to make sure our plants are healthy and growing well all year round.

**What is your average work day like?**

Depends on the time of year! We start work at 7.30am so you must be able to wake up early! It can be anything from weeding to big pruning jobs and everything in between. It is sometimes wet, cold or muddy but always good fun.

**Did you go to university? If so, what did you study? If not, what did you do after leaving school?**

No. I went to Plumpton College for two years to study a City and Guilds Level 3 Horticulture diploma which is equivalent to A-levels. I am currently finishing my studies for RHS level 3 Diploma in horticulture which is a well-recognised qualification in the horticulture industry.

**What do you most enjoy about your job?**

Being outside surrounded by nature and working with like-minded people.

### **What sort of personality traits do you have that help you in your career?**

A passion for the job that I do. I am motivated and ambitious which helps me to develop my skills and knowledge helping me to be better at my job. I always strive to do the best I can.

### **What helped you get your role at Kew?**

Practical work experience both in a garden centre and a public garden. I think having practical work experience as well as an enthusiasm for the job shines through more than your qualification level.

### **What advice would you give to someone considering a career like yours?**

Get as much practical work experience as possible in a variety of gardens and working with lots of plants. Ask questions; this helps you to learn more. Learn as much about plants as you can either by doing a horticulture course or reading books and researching plants.

### **What do you want people to know about your work?**

The interesting and rare plants which we grow.

How science and horticulture work together to help conserve plants and landscapes.

The amazing varied landscape which we look after as it helps to support a large range of wild-collected plants.

### **Want a career that grows?**

Build your skills in science, technology, engineering, art and maths to give yourself a chance to blossom in a career like one of these varied and exciting jobs at Kew.

*You could make a real difference to the world.*

**For further information: [www.kew.org](http://www.kew.org)**